

IN THE CLAIMS

Amendments To The Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1-3 (Canceled)
4. (Currently amended) An electric power steering apparatus comprising;
an electric motor generating an assistant steering force
a worm shaft engaged with said electric motor so as to be rotated by the assistant steering force thereof;
a worm gear disposed on said worm shaft, and engaged with said worm shaft so as to rotate therewith;
a worm wheel engaged with said worm gear so as to be rotated thereby;
a pinion shaft engaged with said worm wheel so as to rotate therewith;
a rack shaft engaged with at least one steered wheel so as to displace said at least one steered wheel along an axial direction thereof, said rack shaft being engaged with said pinion shaft so as to displace said at least one steered wheel as said pinion shaft rotates;
first and second supporting units supporting first and second ends of said worm shaft such that said worm shaft is rotatable, and
a distortion prevention unit engaged with said worm shaft at a middle in a longitudinal direction thereof, such that said worm shaft is rotatable, said distortion prevention unit including an engagement assistor, said engagement assistor pushing said worm shaft toward engagement with said worm wheel, said engagement assistor including a first roller, a second roller adjacent said first roller, and a spring, said spring pushing said first and second rollers against said worm shaft, wherein said first and second rollers are arranged such that said worm shaft is disposed centrally to said first roller and said second roller.
5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)
7. (Previously presented) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said first and second supporting units support said first and second ends of said worm shaft without play.
8. (Previously presented) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said first supporting unit comprises at least one ball bearing.
9. (Previously presented) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said second supporting unit comprises at least one ball bearing.
10. (Withdrawn) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said second supporting unit comprises a needle bearing.
11. (Previously presented) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said second end of said worm shaft is joined with said electric motor.